

## 2011 MICHIGAN WELL WATER SCREENINGS FOR NITRATE

**M**ichigan conservation districts will screen drinking water well samples for nitrate during 2011. The screening is sponsored by the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) and is paid for by funds generated from Michigan pesticide and fertilizer registration and tonnage fees. There is no fee to participants for this service.

Samples from drinking water wells will be screened for nitrate and nitrite. The screening is open to everyone who uses a personal well for drinking water; however, the number of samples that can be tested may be limited. Check with your local conservation district office or with your local MAEAP Water Stewardship Program for information on the dates and times of local water screening events. Information and forms are also available at [www.michigan.gov/waterstewardship](http://www.michigan.gov/waterstewardship).

This service is for private drinking water wells only. Public water supplies are tested regularly. Please do *not* bring samples from public water supplies or non-drinking water sources. Only drinking water well samples will be tested. You do not have to use a special bottle for this screening. Any small clean jar will work – one ounce of water is enough.

Please follow the directions below to sample your well. *Collect samples just before getting them to the sample drop-off. Samples must be less than 48 hours old for a valid nitrate result.*

1. Fill out the water Sample Information Sheet.
2. Pick a tap that supplies water that has not run through any treatment devices (water softener, carbon filter, etc.). An outdoor faucet often works well.
3. Run the water for 20-30 minutes before collecting the sample. This will give the pump time to flush the water pressure tank and plumbing so you can collect a valid sample. Disconnect any hoses before collecting the sample; do not sample through a hose. Rinse the sample bottle and lid thoroughly in the water to be sampled; then fill and cap the bottle.
4. Label the bottle clearly with your name, the sampling date, and the well name (cottage well, Mom's well, etc.) using a waterproof pen. Put the sample information sheet into a waterproof bag, and then seal the water sample and the information into a second waterproof bag.
5. Keep the sample dark and cold (on ice or refrigerated) until it is dropped off.

All results are confidential. You will be mailed a copy of your results in 8 to 10 weeks, with information about what to do if the concentration of nitrate or nitrite is too high.

Be sure to fill out the Sample Information Sheet completely and bring it with your water sample to the drop-off. **We need a complete mailing address to get your results back to you.** You can get more information from your local conservation district or your local MAEAP stewardship technician.



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